

CHILD STUDY

THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

From Babyhood to Childhood—
The Child's Physical and Mental Development

The Real Function of the Nursery School

By HELEN T. WOOLLEY



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No. 2

From Babyhood to Childhood

New methods of checking up the little child's development

By Edna Brand Mann*

IT was three-year-old Elizabeth's bed time, and her mother observed, "I must carry my little girl upstairs and put her to bed."

"Carry her up?" exclaimed the visitor in surprise. "You don't mean to say she can't walk up?"

"Why, I suppose she could," said the mother, and she thereupon let Elizabeth clamber merrily up all by herself, using both hands and feet but getting there with very little delay. "You see, Elizabeth is the youngest, and I'm afraid we have kept on babying her without realizing it."

Parents generally do not know whether they are asking too much or too little of their small children; and whether the development of the little child is proceeding in an orderly and normal fashion from babyhood to the time of starting in school. Considering this, what can be done about it?

Common sense would say that the best way to tell whether a child is normal or not at a given age is to compare him with other children of the same age. But the parent's observation is not trained and therefore may be inaccurate, while the mother's and father's knowledge of children of the same age as theirs is limited.

The work of developing physical and mental standards for young children requires the knowledge and technique of a scientist, and fortunately, Dr. Arnold Gesell has been engaged for the past six years in precisely this project. His findings promise to be of practical value to physician, teacher and parent.

At first Dr. Gesell's work in the Yale Psychoclinic was concerned mainly with exceptional children of school age, but his chief interest shifted to the dramatic, quickly changing years from birth to six years. These years assume pri-

mary importance, not only because they come first and thus form the foundation of later growth, but because they are dangerous, eventful and relatively unexplored. Dr. Gesell felt the need for establishing definite standards for the normal child's development in different stages of the pre-school period.

"A man is as old as his arteries," said Dr. Gesell, "but an infant is as old as his behavior." So he watched what the babies in the clinic did under certain situations and stimuli, and extended this careful observation to children in their homes. Children of two, three, four and five years, and babies of four, six, nine, twelve and eighteen months were studied. Interviews with parents shed further light

The mental tests evolved by Binet and his successors formed a basis for much of Dr. Gesell's experimentation. He had to simplify them, to add other elements and to adapt his procedure to young children. He watched the infants' movements and reactions. Did it hold its head erect? Did it try to sit up? Did it creep, hitch or walk? Could its tiny hand hold small objects? He wanted to know how far it had progressed toward the achievement of language ability. At what age could it first pronounce simple syllables and words? He judged the child's stage of development in part by its reaction to people around it and by its personality traits. He tried to find out whether it could make use of the things that were presented to it or adapt itself to new situations.

The series of standards for different ages—developmental schedules, as they are called—which has evolved as a result of this study of hundreds of normal children—at once suggests several lines of practical application. The alert

*Based on "The Mental Growth of the Pre-School Child," by Arnold Gesell, Macmillan, 1925.

mother is already accustomed to the idea of weighing her child at stated periods and comparing this weight with what the charts and doctors say is the normal weight for that age. Perhaps in time these personality and mental schedules will become so simplified and standardized that she will be able to check up her child's mental and personality development almost as accurately as she can now check up on his physical progress.

The child specialist who now is consulted when the weight of the child is below or above par may broaden his scope to meet the mother's anxiety because her six-months-old does not laugh when he hears music or turn at the sound of a bell or notice himself in the mirror. For reactions such as these, it is thought, are sign-posts of the child's development.

The blithe and easy answer, "Oh, he's young yet—he'll catch up after he starts in school," or "He'll outgrow all that" will not carry as much weight as it used to. In the light of accurately worked out schedules of just how a child should act at different stages of growth, it will not be so easy to pass by lightly the difficulties which begin to appear in the pre-school age. Retardations and variations should be recognized at once, for the time to correct a defect is at its beginning. Says Dr. Gesell, "Normal mental growth is not a matter of complete predestination, even in infants. Defects, handicaps, deviations, many of them preventable, occur—numerous cases of mental abnormality, of perversion, faulty habit-formation and of conduct disorder have their roots in the pre-school years."

No element is quite as significant in the development of the personality of the child as his growth in self-reliance and independence. In cases where mental and emotional difficulties arise in children, this is one of the first factors to be examined. Training along this line can scarcely begin too early. "Not only from the breast should the child be weaned. He cannot always play in his mother's lap. He must in time begin to play on the floor; he cannot always play in the same room with his mother, he must learn to play in an adjoining one . . . he must even learn to go to bed alone and later to school alone."

While a great many defects and lacks can be remedied by careful attention in the first years of a child's life, it is just as well to face the fact that along certain lines training and environment will make little difference. To attempt to force a child to be what he has no inborn equipment or

capacity for is both cruel and useless; it can only lead to disappointment to both parent and child.

"It is interesting to note in this connection that the rate of development is apparently lawful—that is, it proceeds regularly and the child does not "catch up" by fits and starts. The child who is markedly retarded or advanced in babyhood will in all probability be advanced or retarded as time goes on. Progress may be interrupted through illness or other physical causes, but the main current of development goes on, though with decreasing rapidity as the child grows older.

The parent will find in Dr. Gesell's descriptions of the different ages of early childhood interesting suggestions and accurate observations which will surprise him by the closeness with which they fit his unformulated guesses. Here, for instance, is the picture of the eighteen-months-old. "This age presents outstanding complications. It is the runabout, fugitive, flighty mercurial age when the attention (and the child!) darts from one point to another with such facility that a false impression of instability is imparted. This is a trying age for the mother . . ."

The five-year-old is presented as over-suggestive, highly conformable. We are cautioned lest our schools exploit the characteristic quality of over-teachability at this age to the risk of the child's individual and personality development.

While the lay observer may try out Dr. Gesell's schedules on different children with a great deal of interest and some advantage along the line of training his powers of observation, it would be dangerous to expect that an accurate diagnosis of the child's stage of development will result. To begin with, the schedules need the testing which only extended experience can give; and secondly, the results of observation, even though accurate, need expert interpretation just as much as an X-ray picture does. "A difference of two weeks or a month may make a great deal of difference in the score or showing in the first year or two, particularly in the field of language responses. Delay in walking may be due to rickets not to subnormal intelligence. Facility in words does not always augur satisfactory personal habits."

Careful observation on the part of the mother and father is of the greatest value, both in aiding them to gain a clear picture of the growing child and in giving them an understanding of possible danger signals, which if heeded may avert later difficulties of development.

The Real Function of The Nursery School

By Helen T. Woolley*

WHAT the nursery school does for the child is important, but it is by no means the whole story. The new relationship between parent and child which comes about as a result of the nursery school should receive due consideration. I would be willing to concede absolutely that the most important single element in the mental welfare of a little child is the child's emotional relationship to his mother and father, the affection that he gets from them, his feeling of continuity and support and of dependence upon them.

What I should disagree with is that an ideal parent-child relationship is best maintained by having the mother and the child together all of the twenty-four hours a day up to five years of age. So many difficulties grow out of the unrelieved companionship of mother and child,—difficulties which are avoidable when a reasonable amount of separation is provided for. I have tried the complete twenty-four-hour care of my own child, so I am speaking from inside experience on that point. If you have the complete and unrelieved responsibility of a little child you are almost sure to fall into one or another of the common emotional pitfalls of parenthood. If you are very conscientious and rather executive in type, you are apt to do entirely too much bossing and dominating, with the result that you either destroy the child's initiative or set him up in hopeless opposition to yourself. If you are the emotional type, you like to feel the child's dependence upon you. So many of us mothers love the baby stage and find it an almost insurmountable temptation to prolong it as long as possible. As a result, the child is not happy out of the mother's presence, and gets into the habit of constantly begging for petting and attention, which is thoroughly unwholesome. Mothers of a nervous and fearful type see all the dreadful things that might happen to children and are constantly trying to avoid them.

These are real difficulties. They do not depend upon the intelligence of the mother but upon her emotional type, of which she probably has not complete control,—very few of us have. The amount of separation of mother and child involved in attendance at a nursery school usually, we find, improves the emotional relationship be-

tween mother and child and enhances its value.

Hitherto, as we all know, little children have been left in their own homes all the time up to the age of five years, and we have felt very strongly the wisdom of this plan. We have not been altogether satisfied with the result. Every kindergarten teacher knows how many children enter school with various types of defects. This seems to indicate that the home has not been doing as good a job as it might in providing either for the physical welfare or for the training and education of children up to the age of five.

One cannot expect every mother to be an expert in educational methods for children between two and five, any more than we expect every mother to be an educational expert in methods for children between five and ten years of age. In fact, at present the younger period is rather the more difficult field, because it is not so well understood and not so well standardized as is the educational work for older children. Even the intelligent mother is apt to make most unreasonable demands of children, asking entirely too little in some directions, just because she does not know what their capabilities are. She is not intending to be unreasonable, but she has never studied the mental development of young childhood.

Our experimental nursery school has afforded us an opportunity for testing the results of unaided home care of young children. For the last four years we have had, in our school, children from a variety of homes, most of them somewhat above, rather than below the community average in economic status, intelligence and education. These children were tested and measured in a variety of ways on entering the school, and again from time to time afterward. The school began furnishing certain services and advising with the parents about home care. The results of such supplementing of home care were judged by the measurable progress of the children in physical growth, mental development and behavior.

In supplementing physical care, the Merrill-Palmer School has provided very adequate physical examinations, including laboratory tests and the constant service of a nutrition expert, who not only plans the main meal of the day for the children at school, but who advises with the mothers constantly about their home feeding,

* From an address delivered at the Parenthood Conference, Child Study Association, Oct. 26, 1925.

and obtains from them frequent records as to what food is actually given at home. Physical progress is checked by careful monthly weighing and measuring, by repeated laboratory tests to see if undesirable conditions are being corrected, and by repeated physical examinations.

One might suppose that children with intelligent mothers, from homes somewhat above the average, were receiving adequate physical care, and yet we find that these children in our nursery school are growing at considerably more than the expected rate for their ages. When we plot the curve of growth for our children and compare it with the standard, we find that at the start they conform very well to the standards of measurement furnished us by the Children's Bureau, but by the time they are five years old and ready to leave us, they are very decidedly above the standard. The nursery school has apparently been able to assist the home to bring about a better result in terms of physical growth and development. Not only measurements of growth, but the correction of the common minor defects of childhood indicate the improved physical condition. Most of the children are constipated when they come to us. Some of them are more or less anemic. These conditions we can correct through scientific diet and through the advice we can give to the mother about the home care of the child, provided we have the child long enough under our care.

Psychologists generally are coming to agree that the level of mental ability depends to a greater extent than we have been willing to concede upon the opportunities for mental growth in early childhood. Young children are learning many things with great rapidity and with great interest. They are learning motor coordination, how to manage their bodies. They are learning the properties of the objects in the world about them. They are constantly exploring and testing and experimenting with things, finding out what they are, what they will do, and how to use them. They are acquiring vocabulary, language, means of expression, and if they get a chance they may be learning a great deal about music and pictures and taking the first step in producing some music and pictures of their own. Here is a wide range of learning going on, but who is guiding it? Are we setting the stage for learning? Is the unaided home at present furnishing an adequate background for the mental development of young children?

We have, in mental tests, a rough way of finding out how much the children are really profiting intellectually by a nursery school regime. We have taken two series of repeated mental tests in connection with the school, one of the children in the school and the other of children on our large waiting list. As far as we know, the children on the waiting list are no different in kind from those in the school; it is merely lack of space that has kept them out. In comparing the tests and retests of the two series we find that the intelligence quotients of the children in the school are going up at a spectacular rate as compared with the children on the waiting list. Whatever may be the scientific implications of this result, it does furnish a proof that the children in the school are profiting intellectually by the opportunity we have given them.

We used to say that children under five had no group interest, that they were inclined to be solitary, and that their social relationship under that age was naturally with adults rather than with other children. I do not find it true of the children in the nursery school. Two-year-old children are more solitary in their play than the older ones; each two-year-old is apt to go and get something that he wants to play with and play by himself. But he plays with an eye upon his neighbor, and he gets interest and stimulus out of what his neighbor is doing. By the age of three children begin to enter spontaneously and definitely into group activities, not very long maintained or very systematically carried out, but distinctly cooperative in nature. By the age of four children are capable of complicated and sustained play in which there is group organization and leadership and community planning of a project.

A great many children are brought to the nursery school whose mothers are concerned about certain phases of their social development. The child is too nervous, he is too shy, he is too domineering, he has temper tantrums, he cries too easily, he is not entirely truthful, he is too self-conscious, he is contrary. We find that the group situation of the nursery school is a powerful aid in helping to correct these tendencies.

A college-trained mother of intelligence as well as education, devoted to her children, came with a three-year-old child that she said was highly nervous. She was doubtful whether he should be entered in the school at all. I told her to ask her doctor if he advised trying the child in the school. If so, we would take him, see how he reacted, and

(Continued on page 10)

Activities of the Child Study Association

Conference in Chicago

The Chicago Association for Child Study and Parental Education, which is affiliated with the Child Study Association, is planning a Mid-West Conference on Parent Education, to be held at the Palmer House, Chicago, on March 4th, 5th, and 6th.

The program includes the following subjects and speakers:

The Child, the Home and the Community—*Speakers:* Grace Abbott, Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., Dr. Ernest Groves, Boston University, and Dr. Elton Mayo of the University of Pennsylvania.

Health Habits—The standards of development in children; children's reactions to food; the new discovery of an old power—sunlight; continuous health supervision; fatigue in children. *Speakers* to be announced later.

The Importance of Childhood—*Speakers:* Dr. Patty Smith Hill, Teachers College, Columbia University; Edna Noble White, Merrill-Palmer School; Dr. Bird T. Baldwin, University of Iowa; Dr. John E. Anderson, University of Minnesota.

Problems of the Adolescent—*Speakers:* William Burnham of Clark University and others to be announced.

The Home, the Child and the School—*Speakers:* Dr. Arnold Gesell of Yale Psycho-Clinic and Dr. Walter Dearborn, of Harvard University.

On March 5th a dinner will be held, with Henry Neumann of the Brooklyn Ethical Culture Society as one of the speakers. Round table discussions during luncheon will be held daily on sex education, cultural backgrounds for the child, nursery schools, and the technique and material of typical child study classes. For further particulars address Room 301, 535 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

The Mother's Part in the Nursery School

A PRACTICAL discussion centering around two nursery schools took place at a conference held by the Child Study Association in New York City on January 13th. Miss Abigail Eliot, Director of the Ruggles Street Nursery School, Boston, and Mrs. Erwin H. Schell, one of the organizers of the Cambridge Nursery School, were the speakers. The Ruggles Street Nursery School is attended by children of the neighborhood and

is largely an experiment in philanthropy, while the Cambridge Nursery School was formed by a group of parents of the professional class.

Miss Eliot emphasized the fact that the nursery school does not plan to take the child out of the home; it is designed rather to supplement the home and to serve as a means of education for the parent. "The parents' role in the nursery school is an exceedingly important one. The nursery school would not be able to carry out its program of development of the personality and character of the child without the aid of its mother and father. This is due not only to the fact that the child spends the greater proportion of his time in the home, but because of the strong emotional tie that binds him to his father and mother."

A certain amount of cooperation by the parents is required in each school. In the Ruggles Street School this takes the form of mothers' meetings and individual conferences. By bringing their children to the school each day, mothers come into contact with the teachers and the newer ideas of education. In the Cambridge Street School each mother gives one morning a week to assisting the teacher in the care of the children. In this way the mother has the chance to observe her child in group activity and to learn the methods of the nursery school.

Mrs. Erwin Schell, who is one of five mothers who organized the Cambridge Nursery School for the benefit of their own children, told of the financial and other details which such an enterprise involves. She told how these mothers, recognizing the superiority of group activity under efficient supervision over individual care by a nursemaid and feeling that the nursery school could be a real means of education for themselves, started with one room and an excellent teacher and finally achieved a simple building with some apparatus. Mrs. Schell feels that by far the most important factors in the making of the school are a well-trained teacher and the participation of the mother. Materials and apparatus have their place, but are really secondary.

"Does the nursery school overstimulate the child?" Mrs. Schell was asked. She replied that in their experience it did not; that the benefit from happy, well-directed activity of the children seemed to outweigh any disadvantage that might arise from their being grouped together.

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The Child's First Years

IT has become almost axiomatic within the past decade that the foundations of a healthy, efficient adult life must be built upon a healthy, efficient childhood. It must also be recognized that childhood is extremely important in itself and forms a valuable and distinct period of life quite apart from its significance as a preparatory school for life itself, that is, adult life.

To this end the attention of the thoughtful parent has been shifted gradually from the school period to the baby days and then to the intervening or pre-school period. We need no longer feel that we can have little or no part in the development of our small children beyond the building up of their physical health. Our opportunities and our responsibilities concern every phase of the child's life. Naturally physical well-being is of prime importance. We can determine through the careful findings of scientists what a healthy baby really is, how to maintain this condition, and how by constant prevision to avoid many of the ills that have beset a less fortunate generation. We have come to look upon certain deviations from the normal as symptoms, and have been encouraged to seek to remove causes rather than apathetically wait for developments and then only attempt a cure.

This principle is equally applicable to all other phases of the small child's being. Just as we are concerned with securing for him a healthy, robust body in babyhood and childhood, as an end in itself and not merely as a stepping stone to his vigorous adult physique, we are increasingly concerning ourselves with securing for him a happy and well-adjusted mind and nervous system which will enable him to live his early years as fully as possible. If we take good care of the child, the

man will, in all probability, take good care of himself.

It is necessary, of course, to perfect the standards and measures by which our little children are rated. To this end, students of psychology have been at work for some years. We know now for example more accurately than formerly, what can reasonably be expected of the average two or three-year-old in the matter of motor control and motor skills. We know that undue significance has often been placed on specific evidences of retardation or acceleration at some periods. We have learned that a child's emotional stability depends very greatly on the contacts he makes—even at two or three the influence of his companions is of importance. A child who is constantly surrounded by adults is likely either to be overstimulated or over-babied. In either case there is great danger of creating an emotional imbalance which will inevitably interfere with his successful functioning.

The quality of the home relationships determines in large measure his attitude toward relationships outside the home, for he will always interpret his later experiences in the light of those which he has known most intimately and over the longest stretch of time. The home, moreover, is the one continuous influence in the child's experience—he may go forth from it for periods of longer or shorter duration but he invariably returns to it, and uses it as his standard of comparison. The kind of obedience that he is accustomed to at home, the attitude expressed there toward other people, the family's conception of money values, all will be reflected in the behavior of the child outside the home.

Whatever contributes to the parents' knowledge and understanding is to be eagerly welcomed. Thus, the psychological clinic has done a great service in establishing norms of development along many lines. The nursery school, in addition to its splendid educational procedure, has shown parents how their children measure up in relation to other children of the same age, and in the study group the parent has an opportunity to interpret, discuss and apply these newer scientific findings regarding the welfare of the child.

MARCH CHILD STUDY

The March number of Child Study will have for its subject "Adolescence". It will contain articles by Dr. Maurice A. Bigelow and Dr. Benjamin C. Gruenberg.

Forming Habits in Early Childhood

From the Minutes of a Child Study Group

Sources: H. Crichton Miller—The New Psychology and the Parent.
W. H. Burnham—The Normal Mind.
H. C. Cameron—The Nervous Child.
Agnes L. Rogers—A Tentative Inventory of Habits. (A pamphlet published by Teachers College, Columbia University.)

IN a consideration of the best atmosphere for growth in early childhood, the following principles, formulated by Dr. Miller, were presented:

First of all, try to understand the nature of the child. The child is not clay for us to mold or a blank slate for us to write upon. He is like a bulb with the future plant within itself. We can plant it in good soil, watch it carefully, give it plenty of air, sunshine and water. Otherwise, hands off. We must not interfere with its natural development.

Second, let the child stand on his own feet. Don't do too much for him. Begin early to teach him to be self-dependent. We are apt to look down on the child. We like the sense of power and like to think of our children as helpless beings. In this, we retard their growth.

Third, let the child do things other children do. Teach him to be careful, but do not refuse to let him take reasonable and necessary risks.

Dr. Burnham outlines five necessary steps in the formation of a habit. The first is training in obedience; not absolute obedience, but obedience to general laws. The second is training in attention. The third is a task on which to concentrate—a task which shall be the child's own and not one which is finished by the parent. The fourth essential is success in the execution of the task. The task must not be so hard that the child cannot achieve success; on the other hand, it must not be so easy that failure is not possible.

Reference to "The Nervous Child" by H. C. Cameron brought out the importance of the suggestions we make and the examples we set young children. The child reflects his environment; cheerfulness, truthfulness and courage are just as "catching" as measles and whooping cough.

There is danger of over-stimulation of the child if there is too much playing with him by adults. The child's limited physical and emo-

tional capacities should be taken into account and care should be exercised lest he become nervous through over-exertion. Much of the child's play should be by himself or with other children.

Adults should not discuss in the child's presence his attitudes toward eating and sleeping. A calm, expectant manner usually results in the gradual acquisition of healthy habits.

A list of the habits which may be expected of the child when he reaches school was quoted from "A Tentative Inventory of Habits," a Teachers College Bulletin prepared by Agnes L. Rogers. Some of the abilities to be expected are that the child should be able to choose some work which he wishes to do and to hold his project in mind until it is completed; that he should be able to see defects in his work and should try to improve it; he should know how to perform errands satisfactorily; to draw or construct some simple object; to obey the rules of the group; to count children, chairs, etc.; to tell a simple story.

Discussion

Specific points in the development of the young child were brought up for discussion.

In training a child in the habit of going to sleep at a regular time it was agreed that a number of factors should be considered, such as correct food, no over-stimulation, and cheerful companionship at bed-time. To allow a child to cry himself to sleep was not considered advisable as a general rule.

Burnham's opinion was quoted that artificial stimuli, such as taking a pet toy to bed, should not be allowed, since sometimes when deprived of its toy the child may not be able to fall asleep. Fatigue is the direct and natural stimulus for sleep.

In this connection it was said that fatigue is a direct, natural stimulus in a purely natural environment. In our artificial environment there are so many stimuli that interfere with sleep that sometimes a child needs something dear to him to soothe him and lull him to sleep.

One of the members asked whether it was harmful to read or tell stories to a child in order to carry him through a meal. It was pointed out that children, like adults, enjoy mealtime in pleasant surroundings, congenial companionship and stimulating conversation, and, given these condi-

tions, the artificial method of reading should not be necessary.

The question was asked why a child with a good appetite may refuse to eat certain things. It was said that this may be due to a number of reasons. Real idiosyncracies do exist, but they are rare. The refusal is more likely to be due to the manner of offering the food, to a passing whim, or to imitation of others. Sometimes putting a small quantity of the food before the child and gradually increasing it is effective.

In discussing the abilities which the child should have on starting school, the question of baby-talk arose. It was agreed that the perpetuating of wrong forms is an injustice to the child and should not be encouraged. However, it is not necessary to make an issue with the child to correct a few baby expressions which rarely continue if the correct form is always used by the parents. Often the child will use baby-talk to gain attention or petting. It is best to talk on the level of a child or a little above it, rather than talking down to the child.

The members were asked to make additions to the list from the point of view of the home. It was agreed that the child should be able to distinguish the primary colors, unless he was visually defective. The power of concentration should also be present. The attention span is not long, but sharp. The newer systems of education take account of this, so that the child works at a given subject as long as he is interested, thus wasting no time.

A child should be able on starting in school to hold and use pencils and crayons. This started a discussion of right and left-handedness and it was suggested that if a child is not definitely left-handed he should be taught to use the right hand; some children are ambidextrous and can use either hand equally well. A child should not be forced to use the right hand. The cause of left or right-handedness is still an open question.

The five-year-old should be able to walk, run and skip, although the last-named skill is not necessarily learned so early. He should be able to move small pieces of furniture around. He should put on his shoes, but need not be able to button or lace them. He should recognize his own belongings.

The following physical habits are usual at this age: Control of the large muscles, habits of cleanliness, the use of the handkerchief, ability to take care of himself on the toilet and to eat lunch without letting food fall on the tablecloth.

A child at school age should have respect for authority and for the rights of others, at least the more tangible rights, such as property. Here the advisability of respecting the child's property rights at home was urged. The child should also be willing to cooperate with others, and know how to distinguish between reality and imagination.

The Function of the Nursery School

(Continued from page 6)

report. The doctor advised trying the experiment.

The child was in a sense no trouble in the school. He was too apathetic to be troublesome. What he did was simply to sit around and wait to be waited upon, and look utterly bored. I didn't know a three-year-old could look so bored. If you put a spoon into his hand, he just sat there with it in his hand. He didn't care whether he got any food or not. If somebody came along and manipulated the spoon for him, he would probably eat the food or some of it. Most of the day he sat around watching the other children.

His behavior at home was very different. He had the most violent temper-tantrums, in which he screamed so that he disturbed the whole neighborhood, and until he reduced his family to a state of obedience and compliance with his wishes.

Never once did that child have a temper-tantrum at school. Our problem was entirely that of breaking through his shell of apathy, by finding something which would arouse his interest. We did not do much except expose him to the group, let him see what they were doing, and come forth and claim his share when he was ready. It is a most important point, not to try to force a situation with children of this age. We had quite a long wait in this case, but in the end he found that the constructive work and play in the school was even more fascinating than his favorite project of dominating his mother in temper-tantrums.

Before he left the school he was a perfectly satisfactory youngster both at home and at school. His constructive handwork with tools was particularly good. Just before he was five, he made a little engine and train of cars that was quite recognizable. He had to have some help with it, but most of the sawing and hammering and putting together he did himself and was very proud of it. Needless to say, this result could not have been obtained without excellent cooperation from the mother. We worked together, she in the home, and we in the school. We found her entirely willing to consider the whole problem dispassionately

and to modify the home regime. This child is now about eight years old. Last summer he went to a little boys' camp, and to our great joy he took the prize as the best all-round camper.

I often think that in discussing human relationships we do not put stress enough on the value of friends as distinct from the value of family relationships. Children need friends of their own age, even when they are only three and four years old. They get an essential stimulus to mental and social development out of contact with their own age groups that cannot be furnished by contact with very different ages. They need, too, their family relationships with mother and father, brothers and sisters. These are not at all mutually exclusive relationships; they should reinforce and supplement one another. They are two needs, both of which are necessary and essential for a thoroughly wholesome mental attitude toward life at any age.

The Location of Nursery Schools in the United States

At present nursery schools may be found in the following states and cities:

California: Hollywood, Los Angeles, Long Beach.

Connecticut: New Haven.

Illinois: Chicago.

Iowa: Ames, Iowa City.

Massachusetts: Boston, Cambridge, West Newton, Wellesley.

Michigan: Detroit.

New Jersey: Upper Montclair.

New York: Ithaca, Rochester, Mt. Vernon, New York City.

Ohio: Cleveland.

Pennsylvania: Flourtown, Philadelphia.

Further particulars concerning the nursery schools in these cities will be sent upon application to the Child Study Association of America, 509 W. 121st Street, New York City.

February Program in New York City

Dr. William H. Burnham, Author of "*The Normal Mind*" will lecture on "*Mental Hygiene*," February 10, 3:45 P.M., 2 W. 64th Street.

Dr. David Mitchell, Consulting Psychologist will lead a conference on "*The Fears of Childhood*," February 17, 3:00 P.M. at the home of Mrs. Lewis Thompson, 157 E. 61st Street. Open to members only.

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Contributors: R. S. Woodworth, Frankwood Williams, Eugene R. Smith, Isador H. Coriat, Howard W. Nudd, Esther L. Richards, Lois H. Meek, Lucia Burton Morse, and book reviews by such writers as W. H. Burnham, Ira S. Wile, J. Carson Ryan, Joseph Jastrow and Eleanor Verdery.

Books Reviewed: The Growth of the Mind, Behaviorism, Safeguarding Children's Nerves, The Normal Mind, Social Problems in Education, Youth in Conflict, The Challenge of Childhood, Fitting the School to the Child, Psychology of the Unadjusted Child, Training the Toddler, A Practical Psychology of Babyhood, etc.

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Book Reviews

Questionable Advice

Beginning the Child's Education. By Ella Frances Lynch. Harper Bros. 1925.

IT is much to be deplored that in a generation in which there has been so marked an advance in thought and understanding of the whole field of child study a book as destructive and superficial as this one should be issued. The author purposes in a series of letters to a mother to give advice concerning the training of her three-year-old child which will have general application and therefore be of interest and help to other mothers.

The purpose of the book may be worthy, but the method of procedure is certainly questionable. The child's day is strictly routinized, with definite half-hour periods to be spent "with Daddy." Helping with housework is included in the schedule, but only the most casual and occasional mention of any companionship other than mother, father or nurse.

The letter on mental advancement is confused and contradictory. In one place the author decries "packing words into the memory when the corresponding conception is not clear," whereas further on we read that memorizing poetry is of value in that "the child recognizes and enjoys rhythm long before he gets the sense."

In the portions that deal with character development the author goes decidedly contrary to modern thought on child training. It is unfortunate that great emphasis is laid on the necessity for training the child to spontaneous, automatic submission to parental authority. Instantaneous submission is to be inculcated by the use of "a nice little switch on her legs." The author assures us that we must resort to punishment to enforce the necessary self-repression, self-control and self-sacrifice. Fear, she tells us, is a necessary and proper means of exacting obedience during the early years.

It is most significant, in view of what mental hygiene has pointed out in recent years in regard to environmental influence, to find this statement in one of the mother's letters: "I think Esther is doing much better in obeying and I feel greatly encouraged. However, she has picked up another little habit; if things don't just go to suit her she will often bite her own little arm. I suppose she inherits her quick temper from my side of the family."

And again in one of the very last letters of this book the mother writes, "Esther does not want to be alone when she is going to sleep and has a fear of the dark. I do not think she is 'playing it' on me, for she sobs in her sleep, twitches and will often call out excitedly." With due appreciation, the advice given by the educator in this instance is on the basis of reassuring the child. However, can we trace the emotional outbursts of biting her own arm, the twitches and outcries at night to the use of this little switch plus establishing the fear of the wrath of God in the mind of the little child, not to speak of the barren, but systematically planned environment into which this child was moulded?

B. G.

The New Education

Our Enemy the Child. By Agnes de Lima. New Republic, Inc. 1925. \$1.00.

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ous educational methods to which children are being subjected in different types of schools, both in New York and elsewhere. Although the simplicity of educational requirements of old is referred to in contrast with the complexity and confusion reigning now-a-days as to educational goals, no time is wasted in discussing the training of youth in the past. The book is concerned with the present and the future, and certainly no more striking contrast could be drawn between ancient and modern than is shown to be coexistent at the moment here in New York, where we may pass from the ordinary class with the ordinary teacher in the ordinary public school to the newest of the experimental centres.

In the one case, the child's will is regarded as an obstacle to be overcome by coercion, he must be purged of his original sin before he is fit for society; in fact, in Miss de Lima's words, in the majority of both public and private schools, "the theory of infant damnation still animates too much of our educational policy."

The new schools, however, are actually daring to put to the test an entirely opposite theory which holds that the natural impulses of the child are creative, not destructive to society, and that "given proper materials and the opportunity to use them, freed from dictation, the child will develop powers and abilities hitherto undreamed of."

The various grades of thought between the extreme of repression and rigid discipline on the one hand, and the absence of coercion and almost of suggestion on the other, are carefully worked out and differentiated, and the book should be remarkably helpful to those who are confused as to the guiding principles of the numerous educational systems now being experimented with. Such methods as the Dalton laboratory plan, the Winnetka system, the Gary and platoon schools are described in a vivid and interesting manner, and a discussion follows of the policy governing certain large and important schools in New York designated as demonstration centres. From these progressive schools, the author passes to a consideration of two schools more frankly experimental, where questions relating to curriculum are of minor importance, and where the "outstanding purpose is to help the children to evolve a world of their own, in which they will think, act, and express themselves on their own level."

Finally the author expresses the belief that by means of "such schools as these, and with the gradual incorporation of their principles into the public school system, it may come to pass that education and instruction will become identical—a thing never before achieved under the sun."

And thus, we may hope, will "our enemy the child" become our friend and coadjutor.

E. M. O.

The Why and How of Learning

Foundations of Method. By William H. Kilpatrick. Macmillan Co. 1925.

THE aim of Dr. Kilpatrick's latest book, "Foundations of Method", is—as implied by the title—a discussion of the principles on which methods of learning in general should be based. The book has grown out of a course of lectures given by the author during many years, and takes the form of free discussion among teachers, a presentation that was decided upon, says Dr. Kilpatrick, partly to prevent the style from becoming too involved and heavy, and partly "to encourage more independent thinking on the part of those readers who come as learners to the book".

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Although this choice of form certainly detracts from the literary merit of the book, and does not prevent a somewhat stilted tone in the conversations recorded, it undoubtedly allows a greater informality of approach, and the introduction of many experiences in a personal story form in place of mere theory.

Perhaps the most interesting discussions are those on "What Learning is and How it Takes Place", "Coercion and Learning", "The Self and Interest", and "Why Education is Changing". This latter change, it may be noted, is attributed by Dr. Kilpatrick ultimately to but one cause, science. The later chapters are concerned largely with the "very insistent problem of adjusting our total educational scheme more effectually to the demands of democracy and of a changing world".

In accordance with this idea of continual change, the author makes no attempt to fix his standards, or even to summarize his beliefs, but concludes his book with the following conversation:

"Are you not sorry that we have reached the end?"

"Reached the end? We haven't reached the end. There's plenty more. We have merely stopped. It is the term that has ended."

E. M. O.

Books Received for Review

- "*Educational Movement and Methods*" by John Adams. D. C. Heath. \$2.00.
 "Our Enemy the Child" by Agnes de Lima. New Republic. \$1.00
 "The Correction of Speech Defects" by H. Peppard. Macmillan. \$1.40.
 "Elements of Educational Psychology" by Lawrence A. Averill. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.15.
 "Old and New Viewpoints" by Knight Dunlap. Moby Pub. Co. \$1.50
 "Early Conceptions and Tests of Intelligence" by Joseph Peterson. World Book Co. \$2.16.
 "Specialized Courts Dealing With Sex" by G. Worthington & Ruth Topping. Frederick H. Hitchcock Pub. Co. \$3.00.
 "The Visiting Teacher Movement" by Julius John Oppenheimer. Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency. 75 cents.

Suggested Reading in Recent Magazines

"*Agnes: A Dominant Personality in the Making.*" By Helen T. Woolley. The Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology. December, 1925.

A case study from the records of the Merrill-Palmer School.

"How to Treat Stuttering or Stammering." By Meyer Solomon. Hygeia. January, 1926.

The writer gives practical suggestions as to treatment and shows that the cause is essentially a disorder not of the body but of the mind.

"Balancing the Baby Budget." By Grace Nies Fletcher. Century. February, 1926.

A problem of the middle-class home is here interestingly presented, but not solved.

"Music From the Point of View of the General Educator." A Symposium by Prof. Kilpatrick, Fretwell, Kulp and Briggs. Teachers College Record. January, 1926.

Dr. Fretwell's article gives an interesting autobiographical sketch of his childhood impressions.

B. G.



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